The

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian

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Notes of the Month.

The visit of His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to Belfast last month was inaugurated by the presentation of a number of Addresses from various Church, educational and public bodies. The ceremony was held in the Ulster Hall, Belfast, and among the addresses presented was one from the members of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The following is the text of the Address :—

To Field-Marshal His Excellency John Denton Pinkstone, Viscount French of Ypres, K.P., G.C.B., O.M., G.C.V.O., K.C.M.G. :

May it Please Your Excellency,

On behalf of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Ireland, we beg to tender to your Excellency the hearty congratulations of the members of this Church on your appointment as the Representative in Ireland of our Gracious Sovereign.

We desire to reiterate our loyalty to His Majesty King George V. and the constancy of our attachment to the Throne and Constitution of the United Kingdom.

We rejoice that you have been chosen to discharge the duties of the high and responsible office of Lord Lieutenant, believing that under your guidance and government the welfare of all classes of the community will be safeguarded, and concord and prosperity advanced.

We trust that through Your Excellency's wise administration the prosperity of our country may be abundantly realised; that every effort of faction meant to disturb the public peace may be brought to nought; that calm counsels may prevail, and that Irishmen may be led to seek, under Divine guidance, those ends which make for the true welfare of all classes and creeds.

We further pray that the devastating war in which Your Excellency has taken so distinguished and honourable a part may soon end in a lasting settlement that shall not only secure the peace of Europe, but advance the freedom and happiness of all Nations.

Signed on behalf of the Church,

ALFRED TURNER, Moderator.
GEORGE J. SLIPPER, Clerk.

The deputation presenting the Address consisted of Rev. A. Turner (Moderator), Rev. J. A. Kelly (Treasurer), Dr. John Campbell, Mr. A. Kennedy Stewart, J.P., Mr. W. H. Niall Nelson, and Rev. George J. Slipper (Clerk). The Moderator was presented to His Excellency by Lieutenant-Colonel Vis-

count Cole, and introduced the other members of the deputation. Mr. J. Millar Andrews, D.L., was unavoidably prevented from being present. At the luncheon given by the Lord Mayor of Belfast in honour of His Excellency's visit, the Moderator and Treasurer were honoured with invitations.

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Sunday, 4th August, was very generally observed in our Churches as Remembrance Day. Unfortunately for those who have long distances to travel to their places of worship, the day was characterised by a steady and heavy downpour of rain, so that many who had no doubt intended to join their fellow-worshippers on the occasion were consequently kept at home. Preaching in Templepatrick, the Moderator adapted his service to the special requirements of the day. Prayer followed the opening hymn, and then came a recitation of the names of those men on the roll of honour and of others known to members of the Congregation who have fought and died in the great cause. A short address was delivered in reference to the fallen ones, and expressing sympathy with their bereaved friends. The Congregation then reverently stood and remembered whilst the Dead March in Saul was played.

* *

The remainder of the service was in harmony with the spirit of the occasion. At the close, after the singing of the National Anthem, the following resolution was passed :—" That the members of the Non-Subscribing Presbyterian Church of Templepatrick, here assembled on Remembrance Day, August 4th, 1918, silently paying tribute to the Empire's sons who have fallen in the fights for freedom on the scattered battlefields of the world-war, whether on sea or shore, and mindful also of the loyalty and courage of our sailors and soldiers, every day and everywhere, unanimously resolve to do all that in our power lies to achieve the ideals in behalf of which so great sacrifice has already been made."

* *

The Rev. S. E. Bowen, of Crumlin, has gone to France to work there under the auspices of the Y.M.C.A. Another of our ministers is already working there, and others have completed terms of service. We feel sure that Mr. Bowen will prove himself very useful among our soldiers, and we wish him well and a happy experience.

A Thought for the Month

" OUR CHRISTIAN MISSION."

" Let us leave talking of the first principles of Christ and go on unto perfection." — Hebrews vi. 1 (part).

If the mission of our fathers " was to enquire and prove, ours is to know and practice. If theirs was to clear away the corruptions of the Gospel, ours is to appreciate its simplicity and beauty ; if theirs was to demolish error, ours is to build up truth. If their mission was for destruction, ours is for renovation. They rolled away the stone from the mouth of the sepulchre, that we may behold the glory of the resurrection. Pure religion is no longer to be taught negatively, but positively. It is time to turn away from the contemplation of that which we renounce, to that which we believe, and to exhibit our principles to the world not merely as the antithesis of superstition, but as the vehicle of religious truth and moral power. . . . It is not, therefore, to provoke a conflict with the advocates of the trinitarian mystery that we proclain God is one, but to win his creatures' hearts and minds to admiration of the sublimity of his nature, the harmony of his works, and the universality of his providence. It is not merely to refute the legendary incarnation and Godhead of Christ that we point to the beautiful, touching and inspiring proofs of his perfect humanity, perfect in every sense, recorded by his biographers, but that we may lead man, as a brother, to trust, love, and follow him, coming unto him with meek and lowly hearts, and when weary and heavy-laden, taking his yoke, which is easy, and his burden, which is light, and finding rest for their

souls. It is not merely to explode so monstrous a legal fiction of barbarian justice as the theory of substitution and satisfaction, that we affirm God's unpurchased and abounding mercy to the penitent, and preach holiness as the condition and commencement of salvation ; but that we may lead men from resting in faith or forms to renewal in the moral image of God, the cultivation of all Christian graces, and the formation of a character so pure, exalted and beneficent, that it seems to bear Heaven's seal, and be itself the pledge of immortality and happiness. It is not to confute such dogmas as those of election and reprobation that we declare the great scriptural social doctrine of the universal brotherhood of mankind, but to establish the true morality, public and private, in head, heart, and life ; to make charity, justice, and philanthropy a natural affection, and level the barriers which have isolated hearts and over-shadowed intellects, and in elevating, unite and blend the whole race into one family."—" On the Principles of Morality," by W. J. Fox.

" DRY BONES."

By Presbyter.

A valley full of bones, all that remained of a battle fought there, under the burning heat of an Eastern sun ! A vision came to Ezekiel : " The Lord said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live ? And I answered, O Lord God, thou knowest. And he said unto me, Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord ; Behold I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. Say to the wind ; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live. So I prophesied, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then he said unto me, Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel : behold they say, Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost."

The house of Israel has been a synonym for the Church of God. The parable is true and searching for all time. Does it apply to present times : is the prophet's vision of the valley of dry bones true to-day ?

The war is on, and never in history have populations been on such intimate terms with Death. Then the question : " What is beyond Death ? " should be a momentous one, and the answer instant. The Church, witness of divine things in all the world, should have its opportunity, if indeed it be the repository of the sacred mysteries.

A wanderer finds his way into a great city. Churches there are of great size of every denomination. The people on a Sunday evening are walking the streets in thousands ; but, with one or two exceptions in the whole of that city, the Churches are practically empty. A building accommodating two thousand, and which once was filled to overflowing, now has about fifty, scarcely perceptible in a place of that size.

Practical business men, men of sound judgment, who are under no glamour as to realities, are asked for their opinion, what reason do they ascribe for this desertion. " The parsons have nothing to say," is the reply. The people have not lost their interest in spiritual realities, for a lady speaking in one of the halls on the coming social order, and dealing with it from the spiritual standpoint, and a couple of evenings afterwards on the question : " Where are our dead ? " can draw audiences that have to be in their places half an hour before time, and hundreds are being turned away from the door, and the lady has no great reputation as an orator : she is simply sincere and unassuming, but she means what she says, and, without fear or favour, speaks out the word straight from the heart, and her audiences respond. They are the type of people that hitherto have filled the Churches ; but at the present moment they feel the Churches have no message for them. Is this a reproach on the Christian ministry : is it a condemnation of the Churches ? It would be cruel and

unjust to say so. It is a matter of gratification that crowds will go to a comparatively unconventional meeting, and listen with close attention to a lecture that is spiritual, even though it is not delivered from a pulpit. The interest in spiritual things is alive. Would that interest have been there had it not been for the work of Churches previously ?

Speaking as one who makes every effort to view matters from the pew, as well as from the pulpit, I am of opinion that the parable can be applied truly to the Churches to-day : " Because our hope is lost." There is too much surmise as to a future existence. The old arguments, based on so-called divine revelation, are weak to-day. There lacks the ring of certainty. The feeling that the younger people get is that it may be so, or it may not be, it doesn't much matter. What is wanted with reference to things unseen is the touch of reality. The multitudes are hungering for bread ; alas ! too often, all that is given them is a stone.

Outside a city church, after a leading preacher of his denomination had finished his sermon and closed the service, a woman who had passed through affliction, said, " His preaching does me no good." She uttered the words sadly, hopelessly. She craved comfort and found none. Yet the sermon by all the recognised standards would have passed. A theological professor would have given high marks for it had it been delivered in class. But in this case it had failed.

I wonder if this is not an inkling to so much failure. Ministers on the whole unquestionably are earnest. There is a lot of cheap criticism and slander hurled against their vocation ; but, whenever I hear any of it, I instantly retort : " The best men, the purest minded men, the most devoted and self-sacrificing men that I know are clergymen ; say what you like." Earnestness is not enough. The motive may be of the best ; but long years of training, the striving after a good style of composition, the study of the masters of thought in philosophy and theology, concentration on the curriculum, largely inherited from monastic days, is no doubt excellent in its way, but there is a possibility of having too much of it when a minister has to come to grips with practical life. There are some things to be passed through and forgotten. While ministers are urged to read, and while it is their duty to study, would it not be well sometimes to get away from their books altogether and find themselves.

One of our ministers visited the home of Emerson. While looking at his books, Mrs. Emerson remarked : " This was his library ; his study was in the woods."

A course of study in Germany was fashionable in days gone by, or a course in Paris. By way of a change, what is to be said for a course " in the school of life, in the University of the Heart," as was said of the training of a man who made his mark in the ministry without ever having been inside a college door ?

Pew re-acts upon the pulpit, as well as pulpit influencing pew. The Church is one. Ministers have often to be what they are, because congregations make them what they are. The influence is not all on one side. The music must be at concert pitch. The prayers and sermon just of such a length and style, and so it goes on, and fetters, rigid as those of any creed, are fastened on the Church, the strangling, deadening effect of custom. Oh for the breath of the Spirit to breathe on the slain and make the dry bones live.

A Book for the Month.

THE JESUS OF HISTORY.

In the course of an address to ministers during his recent visit to Belfast, Dr. Carpenter referred to " The Jesus of History," by Mr. T. R. Glover, as one of the signs of the times. It is certainly remarkable that such a book should be published by the Student Christian Movement. Here we have in popular style an interpretation of the

mind of Jesus in the light of modern scholarship and with profound spiritual insight. Mr. Glover does not definitely and distinctly pronounce opinions on such theological questions as the Virgin Birth, the Deity of Jesus, and the Resurrection, nor does he take sufficient account of what is called the Eschatology of the Gospels, the overshadowing conviction of the nearness of the last judgment and the end of the ages; but perhaps these omissions contribute to his success in vivid presentation of the earthly life and of the teachings of Jesus. The chapter on "Childhood and Youth" is a fine sample of the legitimate use of historical imagination, and the concluding paragraph gives an indication of his method. "So he grows up—in a real world and among real people. He goes to school with boys of his own age, and lives at home with mother and brothers and sisters. He reads the Old Testament, and forms a habit of going to the Synagogue. All points to a home where religion was real. The first word he learnt to say was probably *Abba*, and it struck the keynote of his thoughts. But he knew the world without as well—turned on to it early the keen eyes that saw all, and he recognised what he saw. Knowledge of men, but without cynicism, a loving heart still, in spite of his freedom from illusions—these are among the gifts that his environment gave him, or failed to take away from him." The chapters on "The Man and His Mlnd" and "The Teacher and the Disciples" are exceedingly useful and suggestive, and seem to us to lead to conclusions rather less orthodox than perhaps Mr. Glover would be prepared to accept. The essence of Christianity is found not in those things upon which the creeds insist, but on real belief in God. "There is a very minimum of symbol and cult in the teaching of Jesus—so little that the ancient world thought the Christians were atheists, because they had no image, no temple, no sacrifice, no ritual, nothing that suggested religion in the ordinary sense of the word. We shall realize the difficulty of what Jesus was doing when we grasp that he meant people to see God independently of all their conventional aids. To lead them to commit themselves in act to God on such terms was a still more difficult thing. To believe in God in a general sort of way, to believe in Providence at large, is a very different thing from getting yourself crucified in the faith that God cares for you, and yet somehow wishes you to endure crucifixion." One wonders what the evangelical and ultraorthodox Students' Christian Movement makes of the following passage: "Jesus brings men to the new exploration of God, to the new commitment of themselves to God simply by the ordinary mechanism of friendship and love. This, in plain English, is, after all the idea of incarnation—friendship and identification." In the chapters on "Jesus' Teaching upon Sin" and "The Choice of the Cross" there is no hint of the scheme of atonement as generally understood. Jesus was not a mere martyr, he was not the victim of circumstance, he deliberately chose the way of the Cross, and meant to achieve something by his death. "He never suggests himself that his death is to force the hand of God." His purpose is rather to compel men to re-think their thought of God. God must be recognised and trusted in even the bitterest experiences. "It all depends in the long run on one thing, and that we find in the verse with which we started: 'And as they followed, they began to be afraid.' But they followed. . . . So with us: to decide the issue, how far are we prepared to go with Jesus? Have we realised the experience behind his thought? How far are we prepared to go in sharing that experience? This will measure our right to understand him. Once again, in the plainest language, are we prepared to follow, as the disciples followed, afraid as they were?"

MEMORIAL NOTICE.

MR. HENRY M'ROBERT.

We sincerely regret to announce the death of Mr. Henry M'Robert, the esteemed and efficient Treasurer of our

Congregation at Rademon, which took place at his residence in Ballynahinch on Tuesday morning, August 6th, after an extended illness. Although not in good health, Mr. M'Robert attended and took part in the recent Church meetings in First Rosemary Street, and was even present at a meeting of the Sustentation Committee held about six weeks ago. He was a member of a family associated with the Rademon Congregation since its foundation. Unfortunately, never having married, he leaves no representative, the only member of the family now residing in the district being an elder brother, aged 84, who is also unmarried. Henry M'Robert was not an old man, being sixty-three years of age, and until lately full of activity. He followed the business of a woollen draper, but retired nine months ago, his circumstances being such as to warrant the indulgence of a rest in his advancing years. Disease of a malignant nature—probably dormant for some time—now asserted itself, and increasing weakness quickly brought the end.

The remains were interred in Rademon on Thursday, and, amongst others present at the funeral, were—Messrs. John M'Robert (brother), William M'Robert (nephew), David Cleland, J.P. (cousin), David M'Mordie, J.P.; Alexander Orr and James Orr (Comber); Revs. James Kennedy, J. A. Kelly, D. J. Williams, J. J. Magill (these four ministers officiated at the house and graveside), Thomas Jamison (rector), John Johnston (Presbyterian).

On the following Sunday in Rademon in the course of an address, the Minister said :—" This Congregation can never again seem quite the same to those who were associated in the work with our deceased friend. There was no department of its activities which did not find in him an enthusiastic supporter. The welfare of Rademon occupied first place in his heart, and nothing was held back by him which was likely to promote the best interests of this Society. He gave of his time ungrudgingly; his strength and ability were freely offered, and his purse was always open on its behalf. Nothing gave him so much pleasure as to see our old Meeting-House in good repair and filled with a reverent assembly of worshippers. He thought nothing of the three long miles separating Rademon from his home. He was always here when wanted. It was a great pleasure to work with him. You know how correctly and carefully he carried out the duties of his office as Treasurer. His accounts were kept with scrupulous exactness. Whilst he gave the necessary attention to large matters, he considered nothing too small or unimportant to have his closest care. As a teacher in the Sunday School he endeavoured to mould the lives of the young, and turn their affections in a healthy direction. His pupils could not but see in him a man of self-control, of pure mind and heart, of simple thought and aim, and of unselfish disposition. Mr. M'Robert lives, and will live, in the present and coming generations of Rademon people. There will always be a halo about his memory in the minds of the worshippers here. In the denomination at large our friend will be missed. There were few gatherings of Unitarians anywhere within thirty or forty miles which he did not attend. He had more or less intimate knowledge of all our Congregations in Ireland: received yearly and preserved their printed statements, and followed closely their affairs. To the formation of the General Sustentation Fund about five or six years ago he lent his aid, and was appointed one of the Trustees in charge of its investments. He was deeply interested in the Orphan Society, which he served as a collector and as a member of the Board of Governors. From time to time he was appointed to nearly all the Committees of the Church. He was fond of attending the annual meeting of Synod in Belfast, and frequently took part in its deliberations. He was a representative Unitarian, loving the broad and ennobling views associated with the name, honest and reliable, simple and unassuming in manner, pure in life and thought, a true and faithful friend, and a good citizen. We shall always be proud to think that he

was born and spent his life in the Rademon Congregation."

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COLONEL ALEXANDER PORTER.

We are sorry to have to record the death of Col. Alexander Porter, Indian Medical Service (retired), which took place in London on May last. Deceased who had attained the age of 77 years, was a native of Moneyrea district, being the son of the late Alexander Porter, of Monlough. After a distinguished career at Queen's College, Belfast, he graduated at Queen's University, and entered the Army Medical Service when quite a young man, spending the greater part of his life in India. Although resident in England since his retirement in 1903, he never forgot his old friends and associations, and often in recent years spent prolonged holidays in his native district, where his genial presence and good nature were much appreciated by his large circle of friends. Colonel Porter was a brother of the late Rev. John Porter, for many years minister of our congregation at Ballee, Co. Down. Born and brought up in connection with the Unitarian Congregation at Moneyrea, he never ceased to be a Unitarian in conviction, and remained a stipend payer in that congregation till his death. His many friends in the North of Ireland much regret his decease. He is survived by a widow, two daughters and a son, who is a captain in the Indian Army.

LESSON NOTES FOR TEACHERS.

(To be used in accordance with the Scheme of Instruction for 1918, issued by the Sunday School Committee of the N.S.P.C.I.)

September 1. *In Prison at Cæsarea.* Read Acts xxiii. 16–35. Key text, Acts xxiii. 11.

Introduction. Paul has fulfilled the Divine command by coming to Jerusalem. Events now begin to shape themselves to bring him to the great City of Rome. He was in the hands of the Roman authorities at Jerusalem in connection with the riot, but the Jews conspired to persuade the captain to send Paul to the Council for trial, and then assassinate him on the way. A young man, Paul's nephew, overheard the plot, told the captain, and he decided to send Paul to the safer ground of Cæsarea for trial. Cæsarea was the headquarters of the chief Roman official of the province.

1. *Preparations for the journey.* The fact that the captain sent nearly five hundred soldiers to defend Paul against his enemies shows how carefully the life of a "Roman citizen" was regarded.

2. *The Captain's letter to the Governor (Procurator) Felix.* This letter hides the captain's own wrong treatment of Paul. We need to remember that he showed no anxiety for Paul's welfare until he learned that he was a Roman citizen.

3. *Arrival at Cæsarea.* Here Paul has to await the arrival of his enemies, who are coming to accuse him before the Governor as a riotous and rebellious person, when all the while it was they who caused the riot. There is a very close similarity between Paul and Jesus in this matter. Against Jesus also the Jews stirred up the mob, and then accused Jesus. But whereas they managed to persuade the Romans to hand Jesus over to them for punishment, Paul was kept for Roman justice, because he had claimed the rights of a Roman citizen. Paul made this claim not because he was afraid of the Jews, but because he wished to complete his work at Rome, in accordance with the heavenly vision. See key text.

September 8. *Paul's Defence.* Read Acts xxvi. 19-32. Key text, Acts xxvi. 19.

Introduction. If Paul's chief aim had been to get fair treatment from the Governor Felix he would have been disappointed; for Felix was a man of bad character. We learn from Roman historians that he was brother to Pallas, a freedman (ex-slave) of notorious character, who had great influence in the reign of the Emperor Claudius. Felix was bad as a man, and corrupt as a ruler. He could find no fault with Paul, but kept him in prison for two years, because he expected Paul to pay

him a big bribe before setting him free. At the end of that time another Governor, Festus, was appointed, and he chose the occasion of a visit of the Jewish King Agrippa II. to Cæsarea to hear Paul's case. Just before this, however, Paul had taken the momentous step of appealing to Cæsar, and this meant that now the final judgment was taken out of the hands of Felix, and could only be delivered at Rome.

1. *Paul's Defence before Festus and Agrippa.* The lesson begins where Paul makes his most important point (the key text). "I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." In this he is an example for us all. His work and ours, his ability and ours, his circumstances and ours, may be very different, but the same duty is for all—to be obedient to the will of God as revealed to us. We may not, perhaps, learn the will of God in a vision, but if once God has told us, whether in our conscience or any other way, what we ought to do, then we must do it. He tells some men to preach, some to be reformers, some to comfort, some to do humble work; but whatever our task, we are all called upon to do it with love for those about us. Paul tried to save the world in a spirit of love. That is too big a work for most of us; but we are all called to show the spirit of love amongst the circle where our life work lies. How many of us have so kept our tempers under control, so bravely faced difficulties, so nobly overcome temptations, so generously helped our fellows as to be able to say with Paul, "I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision?"

2. *Festus declares Paul to be mad.* He, no doubt, prided himself on his own cleverness, and could not understand any man sacrificing all things as Paul had done for the sake of a vision. Paul turned and appealed to King Agrippa, who, as a Jew, knew that the glory of the Jewish religion, whence Christianity sprang, was that it was always looking to a heavenly vision—a nobler and better world. Agrippa realized that he was in sympathy with Paul, but, not being willing to make any sacrifices, diverted the matter by exclaiming jocularly (for that is what his words came to), "Ah, you are not going to make me a Christian quite so easily as that." Thus he made the great refusal. He was worse than Festus, because Festus had not seen the heavenly vision, but Agrippa had seen it, and, for the sake of worldly ease and pomp, refused to obey it.

3. *Festus' Verdict.* He was more honourable than Felix, and would have set Paul at liberty, but Paul, by appealing to Cæsar, was now compelled to make a voyage to the Imperial City of Rome.

September 15. *The Voyage to Rome.* Acts xxvii. 1–2, 18–44. Key text, Acts xxvii. 22.

Introduction. The lesson is so full of interesting incidents that only a few brief notes are needed.

1. *The ship of Adramyttium.* They left this ship at a place called Myra, and embarked on one which was to go to Rome.

2. *Paul's behaviour in the storm.* (a) *His vision.* He had warned the centurion that they ought to have stayed at the island of Crete, but, even though disregarded, he did his best when the storm actually broke to cheer them all up. So convinced was he that he would get to Rome, that he told them that they could be of good cheer. All would be saved with him.—(key text). (b) *He thwarts the cowardly sailors* by having the boat cut away. (c) *He makes them all take food.* Nothing could have been more inspiring that the sight of the Christian prisoner, in the midst of the wrack and ruin of the storm, calmly asking God's blessing on his bread, and eating it, as though danger was far remote. Eventually the ship broke up in a convenient spot, and all made their way to the shore. What is most impressive in the whole story is the way in which the right man came to the top. The prisoner took control of the whole ship, none daring to gainsay him. He knew that "within the great hand of God I stand," and therefore had no fear for anything. Sir Philip Sydney showed a similar spirit when he declared, as the storm bore

his frail vessel down, " We are as near to heaven by sea as by land." When a man really feels the presence of God, he towers above all those about him, and in time of danger will have no fear for himself, and will be a comfort for others.

3. *The Island.* The island on which they were cast was the modern Island of Malta.

September 22. Arrival and Residence at Rome. Read Acts xxviii. 16–31. Key text, II. Tim. ii. 9.

Introduction. Three months were spent on the lonely island of Malta; for in those days very few ships would sail the wintry sea, and not until good weather came could they get a ship. Eventually Rome was reached.

1. *Paul's position.* He was very kindly treated by the authorities, who allowed him to live in his own hired house, meeting what friends he liked; but a soldier kept guard over him, and he wore a chain.

2. *Paul and the Jews.* The last recorded act we have of St. Paul is most characteristic. He sent for the leaders of the Jews (of whom there were a great number in Rome) to see if he could not win them to Christ, or at any rate show that he had no quarrel with them. The old fighter spent his last years especially fighting to bind men to him in love. Note, how anxious he is to say that, although it was Jewish persecution that drove him to appeal to Cæsar, yet he desires no revenge against his enemies, rather has he come to Rome to plead the cause of Christ. On a set day he endeavoured to persuade a great company of the Jews to accept Christ as being the fulfilment of Judaism. He failed once more to carry the majority with him, and then regretfully quoted the prophet Isaiah against them, saying, that since their ears were shut, he must labour among the Gentiles.

Paul's fate. All we learn in the Acts is that he spent two whole years in his hired house at Rome waiting for his case to be decided. What caused so long a delay we do not know; but, as usual, Paul regarded it as an opportunity to preach Christ to all who came his way. He might be bound, but the word of God was not. (See key text). According to tradition, Paul suffered martyrdom in the persecution of the Christians that broke out in the reign of Emperor Nero.

September 29. Review.

E. H. P.

B. E. F. IN EAST AFRICA.

(Continued.)

We continued to run to Morogoro till the end of September. Stocks of cattle and horses were seriously depleted by the ravages of various diseases. I have already referred to the loss, within a fortnight, of almost an entire consignment of horses. The same trouble affected hundreds of others. The tse-tse fly was so common that when remounts moved from place to place three or four appointed men followed some five miles behind, whose sole duty was to examine horses that had dropped by the way, which, if infected, were shot, and cattle also received the same treatment.

We made another advance about the beginning of October from Mikessi to Buko-Buko, after which we received two days' rest, and were placed under South African officers. Resuming duty, we discovered that there were to be some changes in our order of running, and henceforth every driver was to run his journeys in and out at top speed, provided of course the engine held together; it meant high speed and no consideration for the motor; but, for all that, the driver's first thought was to make a comfortable seat for himself. Had I had a camera with me I could have had some pictures of rare scenes, which would have put " Harry Tate in Motoring " into the shade. Sometimes we ran at 30 miles per hour over what was supposed to be a road, 8 feet wide,

with a precipice on one side and high rocks on the other, often without a brake for safety's sake, and sometimes we rushed over newly-made and very narrow trestle bridges, and some one or other of the drivers would miss it and flop into the river, or tumbled over the side, or dropped clean through the bottom of it into the same cool place. Stirring performances of this kind meant the loss of a day through having to go round the neighbourhood looking for kind and strong natives to help to get the motor out of the river and readjust the wobbly bridge. On these occasions we often saw wild animals ; the country was mountainous, the scenery sublime and romantic, and our runs took us over mountain tracks fit only for mules and across expansive plains, rich and fertile, and along the beautiful Rufugi, a fine broad river, but which would disappoint an ardent English angler, for, instead of finding trout and salmon rising to his fly, a shiny alligator would compel him to rise and fly in a hurry. In this district we observed countless drills of pineapples, numerous rows of orange, lime, and banana trees, and for miles there were signs of agricultural effort ; and, in addition, there were rubber and cotton plantations. Eventually we were ordered to return to Morogoro, where we were stationed for a month, during which I noticed that the wind behaved in a strange manner. Every night, at just about the same time, between six and eight o'clock, it would rise, and increase gradually until it attained tremendous force, sweeping everything before it and covering every object with dust.

From Morogoro we went to Dar-es-Salaam by train, a journey of 120 miles, which we did in 12 hours. We arrived at our destination on the day before Xmas. The first thing we heard there was the sound of a pipe organ, and in a few minutes we saw people going to Church, which seemed like civilisation, but we learned later that they were only Germans going to Mass. If their boasted Kultur is hated by the world at large, their music anyhow, especially after a long sojourn in the wilds, was most enjoyable. As a town, Dar-es-Salaam is of a moderate size ; our leisure gave us an opportunity of seeing all about it ; there were two Churches, two public-houses (which generally go together), wireless station, a street of business houses, two parks which contain two statues—one of Bismarck and the other of Wilhelm II, and tropical flowers in their full glory. The harbour, it is said, is one of the finest in the world ; whether that is so or not I could not say, but it appeared to be well sheltered and convenient. The German Army before evacuating the locality destroyed everything that could be of use to us. They sank one of their biggest vessels, the "Konig," at the harbour entrance, but our own warships were not long in obliterating an obstruction of that sort. Jack Tar did some neat and effective work on some of the buildings in this town, on the Government house, the wireless station, and the German political club. The gunner and gun that did it gave a good account of themselves, for an armour-piercing shell went clean through six walls, completely demolished the club, damaged a part of the Central Railway Station, and knocked the Government house to smithereens. When the town passed into our hands business resumed its normal aspect. Civil government by this time had succeeded the military. Numerous Germans still remain in business in town, but none anywhere outside. There are several nationalities represented, such as Greeks, Arabs, Persians, etc., who endeavour to get the highest prices for the articles they sell. Having stayed in Dar-es-Salaam a month, we were informed that we were to move south—towards Cape-town, and on Sunday, January 21st, 1917, we made our departure at 4 a.m. on the H.M.S. "Delta." Within two hours we witnessed a burial at sea. After a five minutes' service, the body, wrapped in a blanket, was lowered to its watery grave, and all was over. Who the departed was I did not know—undoubtedly one who had died for King and Country.

(To be continued.)

ENEMY ALIENS.

[We have received the following communication from the Rev. John Barron, of Ballyhemlin.]

Between combatant nations in days gone by there has always been the "ancient chivalry of arms." We know what that term connotes; and the ceremony of dashing the banner of the German and Austrian Emperors to the ground, from the place where they hung, among those of the Knights of the Garter, the Marshal declaring them to be "no true knights," was done, not because they were at war with us, but because the ancient laws of chivalry had from time to time been grossly violated. Once more we have been reminded that it is a "wild beast" with which we are at war, "with which it is of no use arguing or reasoning."

Your readers will unanimously approve of the manly resolution passed at Liverpool at a meeting of seamen, requesting the Seamen's Union "to add another five years to the boycot of Germany for this most drastic and cowardly murder of our brothers on the sea."

If every trade and vocation in the land made a similar resolution, there would be a stiffening of the nation's backbone in its determination that such vile deeds shall have no place within the pale of civilization.

The Liverpool Cotton Association passed a resolution, "That no member, or his firm, shall trade, either directly or indirectly, with the present enemies of Great Britain for a period of ten years after the conclusion of peace.

I read in the Bible, "He that provideth not for his own household hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." A man's duty is to provide for his own household and to protect it. Remember how Theodore Parker presented an escaped slave with a Bible and a sword, bidding him read his Bible, and defend the wife to whom he was being married.

There is great confusion in the mind of many earnest people, who are anxious to keep as close as they can to the precepts of Jesus between the war of arbitrament and the war of self-defence, and as to the meaning of "forgiveness of enemies."

Forgiveness is only called for when the aggressor shows repentance. A weak person can do more harm than a deliberately bad one.

Christian ethics to me mean this, that though one may not be an aggressor, yet when it is necessary to fight, strike hard. The Bhagavad Gita, which contains so much Christianity that Bishop Westcott thought it must really be derived from Christianity, teaches how a soldier may fulfil the Divine Will, and gives point frequently to its teaching with the words, "Therefore fight."

When vocations of one kind and another are asserting their loyalty, and taking precautions for their future security by excluding Germans and Austrians, and declining to have any more dealings with them than is absolutely necessary, the Christian ministry should surely show itself possessed of no less grit. Certain missionary societies have openly announced that it will be years before cordial co-operation with German missionaries will again be possible.

Are German ministers (if any) in our midst in any better case? When so many of us have to lament the loss of loved ones in a war brought on by Germany, we have a duty to our country and to our Church, to make as clear an understanding as to the future as the sailors have done.

I have given notice of my intention at the next meeting of my Presbytery to move, that those who are responsible for the Roll of Ministers in the Essex Hall Year Book, be requested to withdraw all names of persons, if any, of German or Austrian nationality, whether or not they are now naturalized, and not without serious consideration of our representative de-

nominational bodies to admit any of these nationalities.

We may not be vindictive, but we are within our rights in assuming an attitude of reserve to those belonging to the countries at whose hands we have had to suffer so keenly.

Has one German or Austrian in our midst, naturalized or otherwise, yet raised his voice in protest against the atrocities countenanced by his countrymen?

For whose benefit is it that any ministers of enemy alien origin seek admission to our pulpits? Is it not for their own, and to secure advantages which would be denied them in their own country?

With the sinking of the "Llandovery Castle" still fresh in our minds, I feel confident that every loyal subject of His Majesty in our community will approve of any steps being taken that will keep Germans from occupying our pulpits for several years to come.

We may have strong sympathy in individual cases; it is their misfortune; but Britishers have had to suffer because they are British.

A JAPANESE OPERETTA.

(*This reporrt has been unavoidably kept over.*)

It is well for me that the Dromore Sunday School decided to give a repeat performance of "*Princess Ju Ju*" on the 19th April, in aid of the local hospital, otherwise I would have been debarred from seeing this very pretty show. As it was, I only managed it by another engagement falling through, and arrived without letting my host know definitely that I could come. In his kindness of heart he had, however, prepared a meal for me in any case, and, though he had himself gone on to the school-room, I was well looked after, and very soon followed him.

There were few people in the hall when I reached it, but before the curtain was rung up it was well filled by an audience which proved to be highly appreciative, the players richly deserving all their applause. Miss Mulligan's performance of the title roll showed that she is capable of really clever work when she exerts herself, but one felt, now and then, that her attention wandered a little. The presentation of *Prince Shee Ma Guin* by Miss M. M'Veigh was excellent, her clear notes ringing pleasantly through the hall. She entered thoroughly into her part, and when the attention of everyone was diverted by an amusing little mishap, she went on steadily with her work, and saved what might have developed into an awkward situation. The *Emperor Hokipokitippitoptop* (you *can* pronounce this name, if you *try*), was very fiercely played by Rev. A. Davison, who seemed to take a delight in making people tremble in their shoes, and in snubbing his Adviser, *Cing Ching* (Master S. Bailie).

Although the Operetta is complete in itself, it follows as a sort of sequel to the one given last year. The story is a simple one. The Princess has just come of age, and makes her appearance on her birthday amidst the tuneful congratulations showered upon her by her father's subjects. She has been troth-plighted since birth to an unknown Prince who is to appear that day, bearing the exact replica of an amulet given to her by a wise woman. Prince *Shee Ma Guin* and *Prince Fu Shu* (Master B. Hegan) arrive disguised as minstrels, and the former claims the hand of the lovely *Ju Ju*, who at once falls in love with him. In spite of her passionate appeals, that peppery potentate, her father, insists that the Princes are nothing but imposters, and orders their execution on the following morning. The luckless Princess flies during the night to consult the Magician, *Abud Hiram*, (played with much appropriate mystery by Master John Bailie. This scene produced an extremely pretty night effect, the *Goddess of Night* being charmingly played by Miss Bailie, while the dainty dancing of the Night Elves on the darkened stage was most effective. Of course,

the Princess gets information which clears her lover, and arrives just as the *Lord High Executioner* (Mr. E. Boal) has raised his axe to strike off the head of the unfortunate Prince, who, with his companion had been compelled by the perfectly heartless Emperor to sing and dance for the entertainment of the Court while awaiting the arrival of their executioner. The scene closes with a happy chorus mingling with the merry bridal bells, and bringing in once more the melody which is so prettily repeated throughout the opera.

Fly Fly (Miss H. Ferris), *Cherry Blossom* (Miss S. Hodgen), and *Sing Song* (Miss M. Scott), as attendants on the Princess, had no great part in the action of the play, except to sing with the chorus and look pretty, both of which they accomplished very well, assisted by *La La* (Miss A. M'Veigh), with a rather bigger part.

A production such as this entails weeks of almost endless work. Whoever was responsible for drilling the chorus deserves great credit, though the boys were just a little stiff in the opening number, forming a marked contrast to the girls in this respect; but they entered with a kind of ghoulish joy into the Song of the Execution in the last Act. The closing chorus of the First Act was very well carried out, its appeal for mercy forming a pathetic background for the Emperor's song, condemning the ill-fated Princes to death. Moreover, considerable care and thought must have been bestowed on the costumes, most of which were home-made, while the scenery itself was tastefully painted by Mr. Scott from clever designs by Mr. W. J. Baxter.

The Operetta was preceded by a little curtain-raiser, showing the many "*Contrasts*" between a modern, sporty, slangy girl (Miss Mulligan) and her prim and sedate sister of a hundred years ago (Miss M. M'Veigh). A very pretty impression was produced by the full-length portrait of the old-time girl, which came to life. The one word of criticism which could be offered is, that, perhaps, the action was scarcely quick enough.

A very pleasant night concluded by the entire company joining in singing the National Anthem.

"NOBODY."

NEW ZEALAND.

Extracts from a Paper read by Mrs. E. R. Jackson to Unity Guild.

New Zealand is a land with great attractions for all types of people. To the tourist it is one of the playgrounds of the world—with the Wonderland of the North Island, that weird region of volcanic marvels, with its geysers, boiling mud pools, steam holes, boiling lakes, open-air swimming baths, and medicinal springs; the Maori Reserves, where the native habits and customs are preserved and practised; the Alpine district of the South Island, where peaks rear their snow-crowned heads ten and twelve thousand feet into the air, and magnificent glaciers and snow fields await the climber; the Lake district of the Southland, where lake and waterfall and mountain peak afford endless variety; the beautiful Fiords of the South-West Coast; the coach drives through deep ravines and over mountain passes; and the many walks through fascinating bush scenery, where ferns, palms, and creepers riot in luxurious confusion over everything.

New Zealand has the most progressive legislation in the world, and labour conditions are most favourable. It is also the most prosperous country in the world. In 1909 the private wealth of the country was £500 per head. The country owes its prosperity to laws passed in the years following 1890 by the Government under the leadership of John Ballance, the son of a North of Ireland farmer, who started life in the house of a business firm in Belfast, became a journalist, emigrated, and rose to the head of the Government.

In the establishment of Unitarianism in New Zealand, North of Ireland people have had their share. A family

named Bradley, from the Ravara Congregation, emigrated, and gathered together the Unitarians in Auckland. Later this movement was revived by a Larne man, a Mr. M'Cready, and later still, the Rev. W. Jellie, who was born at Moneyrea, went out, and in two years the church was built, and under his able ministry of twelve years flourished in every way.

There are also thriving churches in Wellington and Timaia, and a small band of worshippers in Dunedin.

The cities of New Zealand are well built and prosperous looking. The smaller towns are built with plenty of room for growth; the whole country is wonderfully developed for so young a civilisation, and, in spite of its youth, this "Furthest Isle of the Outer Sea" can send her young men in their thousands to fight for the Mother Country, can subscribe for battle cruiser and battle plane, and can send hospital ships equipped in every way, as well as those of the older civilisations.

Reports.

Larne.—Morning Service in the Old Meeting-House, Larne, on Sunday, 4th August—the fourth anniversary of the outbreak of war—was one held in special remembrance of the valiant young men of the Congregation who have fallen. Though rain fell very heavily almost till Church time—keeping many country members away—there was a gratifying and representative attendance. The sermon for the day defined prayer as the "conscious touch and converse of the human soul with the Eternal," including much more than mere petition, viz., adoration, thanksgiving, confession, aspiration, etc., and touched upon the "communion of saints" and "communion with the dead," as believed in by many, including so great an authority as Sir Oliver Lodge. Mention was made that 51 young people of both sexes had placed their services at the disposal of their country, of whom twelve had fallen, and that one—W. J. Rock—had completed his full training, and was awaiting orders to leave for France, when he died rather suddenly at Bristol. The names of the fallen in action are—Samuel Bell, Thos. Cook, John Gingles, Hubert Magill, Hugh Montgomery, William M'Ilroy, Samuel Nelson, Andrew Nelson, D. A. Nelson, Thomas Robinson, Robert Robinson (brothers), and Samuel Sittlington. In accordance with a very ancient custom the names were recited, after which special prayer was offered and the "Dead March" ("Saul") rendered on the organ by Mr. Holmes as touchingly as usual, the congregation all standing with heads reverently bowed. The service concluded in the usual manner.

A magnificent wreath of natural flowers, presented by Mr. T. Fleming, of Larne Nurseries, was placed on the Communion Table—a beautiful and most appropriate tribute to the memory of the fallen lads.

* * *

Comber.—The Annual Sunday School Excursion was held on Saturday, 27th July, in a field kindly lent by Mr. Frank Osborne. The weather was ideal, and everyone enjoyed themselves to the fullest extent. Mr. and Mrs. Osborne were unfailing in their kindness as hosts. The young people passed the time at games and races, and it was not until late that the party broke up. The Band of the First Troop Comber Scouts kindly accompanied the party.

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And happy all its days;
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